GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3021
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2003
SUBMISSION OF REPORT TO CEDAW
SURESH KURUP

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has submitted its second periodic report to the Committee on CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women);

(b) if so, the details thereof including the main observations and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee on India's initial Report; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay in the submission of the periodic reports and due dates of the 2nd and 3rd periodic reports?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI JASKAUR MEENA)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The concluding comments of CEDAW Committee on India's initial report, which was considered in January 2000, are detailed below:

CEDAW commended India for its

1. Recognition of fundamental right to gender equality and non-discrimination and enabling provision on affirmative action in the Constitution.

2. Contribution made by the Supreme Court in developing the concept of social action litigation and jurisprudence on gender equality and non-discrimination.

3. Introduction of a range of policies and programmes by the Government of India over the years to improve the situation of women.

4. Setting up of National and State Commissions for women with statutory roles of watchdog on gender discrimination.

5. Affirmative action reserving 33 per cent of seats in local government bodies for women.

6. Directives from the Prime Minister's Office to mainstream gender issues and a rights approach to development at the national level.

7. Introducing legislation that has banned sex-selective abortions.

8. Amending laws on nationality, which confer equal rights on men and women.

9. Proposed national policy on empowerment of women.

The main areas of concern as noted by the CEDAW committee were the following:

1. Inadequate allocation of resources for women's development in the social sector.

2. Gaps in the legislative framework, which should be bridged to promote equality and the human rights of women.

3. No steps taken to reform the personal laws of different religious and ethnic groups, which perpetuate sexual stereotypes, son preference and discrimination against women.

4. The convention and the Beijing PFA not integrated into policy, planning and programmes, which still adopt a welfare approach towards women.

(c) India ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women on 25 June 1993. India presented its first report to the CEDAW Committee in 1998, which was considered by the Committee in 2000. The submission of the initial report, which was due in 1994, got delayed, as it was preceded by widespread consultations throughout the country from 1993 to 1996 with

women's organizations and NGOs, and discussions with various Ministries/Departments on different Articles of the Convention.

India's 2nd periodic report was due on 8 August 1998 and 3rd periodic report fell due on 8 August 2002. Consultations with regard to India's second and third periodic implementation reports on CEDAWare underway. Countries which have more than one report due can combine the reports to enable them to eliminate the backlog.